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)
APPLICATION NO.: 10/663,918) Group Art Unit: 1724
CONFIRMATION NO.: 2288)
)
FILED: September 16, 2003) Examiner:
) Robert J. Popovics
)
FOR: A SOLID-LIQUID SEPARATION) Attorney Docket No.:
PROCESS) 37,512

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Commissioner
for Patents
Alexandria, VA
22313-1450

In the Office Action dated September 26, 2005, the Examiner has filed a restriction requirement under 35 U.S.C § 121, dividing the subject claimed invention into the following three groups:

ANY ADDITIONAL FEES REQUIRED
CHARGE TO DEPOSIT ACCOUNT
NO. 01-0528

Opposing Force Species	Opposing Force
OF-1	Hydraulic
OF-2	Pneumatic
Displacement Fluid Species	Displacement Fluid
DF-1	Liquid
DF-2	Gas
Filtration Zone Species	Defined By:
FZ-1	Concentration
FZ-2	Pressure

The Examiner has omitted to designate specific claims of the subject application to the three Groups. Applicants thereby assume that Applicants are to make such designation; however, if this assumption is incorrect, please advise Applicants to the contrary.

For the purposes of provisionally electing claims as required under 37 CFR 1.143 and traversing the Examiner's restriction requirement, Applicants designate the claims as follows: (1) Opposing Force Species as Claims 17-22; (2) Displacement Fluid Species as Claims 1-16 and Claims 23-52; and (3) Filtration Zone Species as Claims 1-39 and Claims 50-52. Therefore, in response to the Office Action, Applicants provisionally elect with traverse the Displacement Fluid Species, and provisionally withdraw Claims 17-22 with traverse.

Attention is now drawn to Claims 1-16 and Claims 23-52. As claimed by Applicants, each of Claims 1-16, 23-39 and 50-52 recites a Displacement Fluid Species and a Filtration Zone Species. For example, Claims 1-16, 32-39 and 50-52 recite "directing a displacement fluid to the higher concentration zone." Stated otherwise, the recitation of "directing a displacement fluid to the higher concentration zone" is a common element throughout each of Claims 1-16, 32-39 and 50-52. In another example, Claims 23-31 recite "directing a displacement fluid into the higher pressure zone. Stated otherwise, the recitation of "directing a displacement fluid to the higher pressure zone" is a common element throughout each of Claims 23-31. Therefore, the Examiner's restriction

requirement based on the defined groups in the Office Action would improperly require Applicants to divide individual claims on an element-by-element basis and/or eliminate dependent claims in which Applicants are entitled too.

Attention is now drawn to Claims 17-22. As claimed by Applicants, each of claims 17-22 recites an Opposing Force Species and a Filtration Zone Species. For example, Claims 17 recites "imparting an opposing pressure on the slurry feed in the higher pressure zone." Stated otherwise, the recitation of "imparting an opposing pressure on the slurry feed in the higher pressure zone" is a common element throughout each of Claims 17-22. Again, the Examiner's restriction requirement the defined groups in the Office Action would improperly require Applicants to divide individual claims on an element-by-element basis and/or eliminate dependent claims in which Applicants are entitled too.

In view of the forgoing, the three groups defined in the Office Action are aspects of a single inventive concept. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the restriction requirement be withdrawn upon consideration.

Customer No. 04249

Respectfully submitted,

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